A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

For the Registration of Ph.D. in the subject of English

(Topic)

A

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF

FOUR CONTEMPORARY INDIAN NOVELS

(Disorderly Women, The Inheritance of Loss, The White Tiger & A Corpse Bearer)

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Research Guide

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Discourse Analysis

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1) Introduction: Discourse analysis is a study of language use concern with the communication influenced by the socio-psychological factors. Discourse is an area of language study in which it is interesting to find how interlocutors make language meaningful. In other words, if a meaningful interaction takes place between two or more interlocutors in any communication could be labelled as discourse. Discourse in linguistic transaction can be oral, spoken or written. The focal point of present research is analysis of linguistic discourse in a literary work particularly fictional. For analysis of fictional discourse in present study four contemporary Indian novels in English have been selected. These four novels are:

1. ***Disorderly Women*** by **Malthi Rao**
2. ***The Inheritance of Loss*** by **Kiran Desai**
3. ***The White Tiger*** by **Aravind Adiga**
4. ***A Corpse Bearer*** by **Cyrus Mistry**

The first novel selected for discourse analysis in present research is *Disorderly Women* by Malthi Rao published in 2005. It won the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in 2007. The second novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai appeared in 2006 and won the 2006 Man Booker

Prize. The third novel, *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga published in 2008; it has also won the Man Booker Prize in the same year. And the fourth novel is *A Corpse Bearer* by Cyrus Mistry appeared in 2012, it has also recently grabbed the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2015 by the government of India. Here, I am introductorily proposing to study above four novels for discourse analysis.

2) Theoretical Framework: The Present research attempt of discourse analysis of four contemporary Indian novels will be based preferably on three models of analysis i.e. the speech act theory, cooperative principle and politeness principle. Investigation and interpretation of these three models will form the theoretical framework of present research on discourse analysis. Searle's and Austin's speech act theories will form the theoretical background for present study. Austin's speech act theory is based on the concept of "saying something is to do something". He proposed an idea that a speaker performs three acts simultaneously while producing an utterance. These three acts are a Locutionary act, an Illocutionary act and a Perlocutionary act. Present research will be carried out within the framework of these speech acts. Further, Searle has suggested five types of speech acts: 1. Assertives, 2. Expressives, 3. Directives, 4. Commissives, and 5. Declaratives. These five speech acts will form theoretical framework for present study. Beside direct and indirect speech acts will be taken in consideration. Grice has proposed the theory of cooperative principle. Grice's theory will be applied to study four Indian novels in terms of observance and violence of cooperative principle in four novels. Politeness principle will also form the theoretical framework for present study. Its observance and violence by different fictional characters will be analyzed at its importance in discourse analysis. Other devices of discourse analysis like Deixis, Turn-taking, Adjacency pairs, Presupposition, Code-mixing and Code-switching may also form theoretical framework for discourse analysis.

3) Statement of the problem: The analysis of discourse in four novels is being done with the help of three devices of it. The analysis of speech acts, cooperative principle and politeness principle will enhance understanding of novels. The present research is needed to be conducted for showing the differences among these concepts/ devices in terms of their functions in four novels selected for study. It is quite difficult to understand the true intentions of interlocutors in their interactions at semantic levels of meaning. Therefore, Discourses analysis makes it quite possible to capture and understand the hidden agendas, attitudes, and true intentions behind the utterances employed by fictional characters in different context. An utterance is always context bounded and always charged with an intention, and this intention conveys a suggested meaning. Discourse analysis is a way to capture this suggested meaning of utterances in different contexts.

4) Objectives of the study: ***(1)*** The authorial discourse as well as conversational discourse between two or more characters in four selected novels will be the prime objective of analysis in the present research work. ***(2)*** The central idea of the study is to analyze the fictional discourse from point of view of Speech Acts, Principles of Cooperation and Politeness. ***(3)*** Discourse analysis becomes an integral aspect of the process of understanding literature at its deeper levels of meaning. The proposed study not only aims to apply the theories of Speech Acts, Cooperative Principle, and Politeness Principle etc. for the analysis of novels but also to discover the beauty of deeper meaning of utterances employed by authors in different context with different intentions. No utterance is context free, every utterance is context bounded. Interlocutors exchange the dialogues or utterances with intentions, these intentions may not be understood properly unless they are interpreted in their respective contexts. ***(4)*** A contextual interpretation of utterances provides deeper insight into an understanding of a fictional work. Present research work is important from the point of view of understanding utterances not in isolation but in the

context they are employed in. ***(5)*** Indian writers in English organize meanings in their novels by applying different strategies of expression i.e. Code-mixing & Code-switching is one of them which becomes an integral part of their fictional creativity. This type of linguistic creativity becomes an Indian way of organizing and expressing meaning. This kind of linguistic transformation becomes itself the very process of Indianization of English that reflects through the four selected novels for study. Identifying and analyzing this phenomenon of Indianization of English is one of the aims of present study. ***(6)*** Linguistic utterances employed in four selected novels are culture-specific because they not only exchange information but also cultural values. The observance and recognition of culture-specificity of fictional utterances is the striking aim of present study on a discourse analysis.

5) Review of the literature: Speech Act Theory is related to language use. People use language for communicative purposes, but how they use it is the concern of this theory. Austin has developed the Speech Act Theory from the basic notion that language is used to do things. Searle has also proposed theory of five major speech acts. Grice's Theory of Cooperative Principle and Implicature as well as Politeness Principle or Irony Principle will be the key theoretical sources for the discourse analysis of four Indian novels. Searle's and Austin's Speech Act Theories, Grice's Cooperative Principle and Politeness Principle or Irony Principle will be considered as an established theoretical framework for discourse analysis in ongoing research. These concepts will be applied to do analysis of four novels.

6) Hypothesis: In a fictional discourse, it is assumed that characters/ interlocutors engaged in conversation perform different speech acts with different intentions in different context. They observe and violate principles of cooperation and politeness in their own special ways. Their observance and violence of these principles reveal the verities of linguistic strategies they

employ in this process. The use of various speech acts as well as observance or violence of cooperative and politeness principles by the various fictional characters/interlocutors/speech communities will be persistently put under keen observation while analyzing four Indian novels. How various fictional characters/ interlocutors employ different speech acts and express their intentions, how they observe and violate cooperative or politeness principles in their conversational process is assumed to be the major outcome of present research on discourse analysis of four contemporary Indian novels.

7) Methods and Procedures: Present study of discourse analysis is application-oriented. Therefore, the four Indian novels selected for study will be analyzed within the theoretical framework stated already in the second point of present proposal. The speech act approach will be applied to analyze the novels. Beside observance and violence of cooperative and politeness principles in novels will be also analyzed. The primary source of data collection will be four Indian novels. The required data for discourse analysis will be selected from these novels on the basis of speech act theories as well as politeness and cooperative principles. Collected samples or examples of utterances from novels will be tested on an assumption that characters employ different speech acts in different context as well as they flout and observe principles of cooperation and politeness in their conversations. Thus, identifying the examples of speech acts from novels will involve the first step towards the discourse analysis. Secondly, the utterances will be collected and thirdly analyzed on the basis of theoretical framework.

8) Scope and Limitation: Taking the nature of the research topic in consideration, there could be found enough scope for application of Speech Act Theory, Cooperative and Politeness Principle in four selected novels. These four Indian novels are selected for analysis because much part of these novels is made of dialogues. The authors of these novels make frequent use of

dialogues or conversation. This frequent occurrence of dialogues or conversation contributes a lot in the thematic development of novels. The different characters in the novels exchange the dialogues from time to time. They do not simply utter the empty voices. Their utterances are full of intentions. Their intentions become matter of investigation for better understanding of fictional works. Characters in selected novels employ different speech acts from time to time and also violate and observe principles of cooperation and politeness while exchanging dialogues. Therefore, in these four novels there is a lot of scope for analysis of utterances.

9) Tentative Chapterization:

Chapter 1

Introduction: Theoretical Framework

The first chapter of present study will be on an introduction of the topic undertaken for research on discourse analysis of four contemporary Indian novels. It will throw light on the theoretical framework of the study. It will discuss the basic devices being applied for discourse analysis of novels. It will aim at explaining the various concepts, ideas, differences, principles, and theories which are being applied in this study of discourse analysis. The chapter first will attempt to explain the concept of 'discourse' and then advances to discuss over the speech act theory, the cooperative principle, the politeness principle and some other relevant concepts or terms related to the study. Thus, the prime objective of first chapter will be providing theoretical framework, explaining the meaning of the term discourse and the various devices providing structural unity to it.

Chapter 2

Speech Acts Analysis of Four Indian Novels

The second chapter will be subtitled as 'Speech Acts in Four Contemporary Indian Novels'. The basic aim of this chapter is to investigate different speech acts used in four novels and then to interpret them accordingly speech acts theories. Authors use verities of speech acts in fictional discourse, discovering these speech acts in terms of their fictional functions will be the focal point of this chapter. Beside an attempt will be made to find out which speech act is dominantly used in four novels and for what purposes. This chapter will view the selected fictional works as speech acts. It will provide the possibility to ponder over the utterances in novels in terms of the context in which they are made, that is, in terms of intentions of characters behind their utterances as well as their attitude, approach and expectations behind it.

Chapter 3

Observance & Violence of Cooperative Principle in Four Indian Novels

The third chapter subtitled as above will investigate how the principle of cooperation is observed and violated in four novels by various characters. Understanding hidden intentions of characters behind observance and violence of cooperative principle will be the major outcome of this chapter. Sometimes, participants in their interactions either observe or violate certain maxims of cooperation. They do so for different purposes. Their true intentions are understood with the contextual analysis of observance and violence of cooperative principle. This chapter will apply Grice's theory of "Cooperative Principle" to analyze the observance and violence of different **maxims of cooperation** ***(quantity, quality, manner and relation)*** in selected novels. Here, it will be attempted to show how a study of cooperative principle covers the reasonable area of discourse analysis in present research.

Chapter 4

Observance & Violence of Politeness Principle in Four Indian Novels

The fourth chapter will be devoted on investigation of observance and violence of politeness principle in four Indian novels. It will throw light on how politeness becomes strategy of conversation. It will also analyze how different characters observe and violate principle of politeness in their interactions. The relevance and function of politeness principle in four novels will be analyzed in detail in this chapter. The Tact Maxim which is a maxim of politeness will be analyzed in context of four novels. The major focus of this chapter will be on the analysis of ***'face-threatening acts'*** like commanding, criticizing, attacking, directing, etc. as well as on ***'face –saving acts'*** like compliments, congratulations, agreements, etc.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Some Other Devices of Discourse Analysis in Four Indian Novels

The fifth chapter will analyze some other important devices of discourse analysis like Deixis, Turn-taking, Adjacency pairs, Code-mixing, Code-switching, etc. with selected examples from novels. This chapter will investigate how these devices bring structural unity to the study of discourse analysis of four Indian novels. It will explain the term 'Deixis' or Code-mixing with the relevant examples chosen from four novels. It will also examine the importance and function of these devices from discourse point of view.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The sixth and the last chapter will be concluding chapter of present research work on discourse analysis of four Indian novels. It will be the chapterwise summary of research outcome. The

basic findings of research work will be highlighted here briefly. It will throw light on how the aim and objectives of the study on discourse analysis undertaken is fulfilled through the present investigation. It will conclude how the purpose of study is fulfilled. It will briefly bring to the notice certain observations regarding the language used in four Indian novels.

10) References

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